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SUBJECT: CZECH REPUBLIC: US-CZECH SUPPLEMENTAL SOFA DRAFT
COMPLETE

1.(U) Ambassador Jackson McDonald led an interagency team through the 9th round of negotiations on the U.S-Czech Supplemental Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in Prague from September 4 to 5, 2008. The Czechs opened the negotiations by officially agreeing to our position on the tax exemptions for U.S. defense contractors, contractor employees, and service support activities. As a result, we were able to complete the substantive negotiations on September 4. On September 5, both sides reached agreement on the Czech-and English-language versions of the SOFA and completed their respective final reviews.

12. (U) First Deputy Minister of Defense Bartak will meet with the Czech SOFA negotiators on Monday, September 8 to decide when to submit the draft agreement to the cabinet for approval. We expect the Czech Government to approve the text on September 10 or 17, with a signing shortly thereafter. The Czech Government has made no concrete decision about when to send the SOFA and the Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement to Parliament, although the Czechs remain committed to completing the ratification process by the end of this year.

3.(U) Ambassador McDonald cleared on this cable.
Graber